

BATMAN
No. 45

FEB.-MAR.
TEN CENTS



BATMAN

**A
BATMAN
and ROBIN
Christmas
ADVENTURE**

A 52 PAGE
MAGAZINE



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WORLD'S FINEST COMICS

COMIQUIZ

ARE YOU
READY FOR THE
QUESTION ?



YES.



WHAT ONE COMIC
MAGAZINE HAS
SUPERMAN AND
BATMAN AND
BOY COMMANDOS
AND OTHER
HEADLINERS ?



THAT'S EASY!
WORLD'S
FINEST
COMICS!



EXCUSE ME
WHILE I RUSH
DOWN FOR MY
COPY!



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Printed in U.S.A.

BATMAN

WITH
ROBIN

THE BOY WONDER

HALL of INFAMY

BOB KANE

*Who is the Greatest
Villainess of All Time?*

IS IT LADY MACBETH? OR
DELIHANT? OR SOME MODERN CRIME
QUEEN? TO VIE FOR THE EVIL TITLE,
HISTORY'S FEMALE FELONS COME TO LIFE
AND RE-ENACT THEIR CRIMES OF THE PAST!
BUT THEY RECKON WITHOUT THAT PRINCESS
OF PLUNDER, THE CATWOMAN, WHO MAKES
HISTORY BY SHOWING BATMAN AND ROBIN
THAT SHE CAN HOLD HER OWN WITH...

*"The Lady
Rogues."*



THE TALK OF THE TOWN IS THE NEW BOOK ABOUT NOTORIOUS WOMEN CRIMINALS...

IS THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES DEADLIER THAN THE MALE?
Red the Sensational Book
"The Lady Rogues"
by NEIL WHITON

MY DEAR, DID YOU READ WHAT HE WROTE ABOUT LUCREZIA BORGIA?

YES, AND HIS STARTLING ANALYSIS OF THE MEDUSA.

HOLLYWOOD PROMPTLY BUYS MOVIE RIGHTS...

IT'S COLOSSAL! A PERFECT STORY FOR OUR NEW STAR, GALA KATON! IT'LL MAKE HER THE MOST SENSATIONAL VILLAINESS ON THE SCREEN!

GALA, WE'RE GOING TO GIVE YOU A PUBLICITY BUILDUP! YOU'LL PORTRAY CIRCE, LADY MACBETH AND OTHER INFAMOUS WOMEN, IN A SUMMER THEATER. IT'LL MAKE HEADLINES FOR YOUR NEXT PICTURE.

MEANWHILE, NEWSPAPERS CARRY HEADLINES ON ANOTHER INFAMOUS WOMAN...

Gotham Gazette
CATWOMAN JAIL ESCAPES JAIL!
The Bullseye
CATWOMAN FREE AGAIN!

IN HER LAIR, THE CATWOMAN CATCHES UP ON HER READING...

THE AUTHOR DOESN'T EVEN MENTION ME! I, WHO FOUGHT THE BATMAN! HE DIDN'T THINK ME EVIL ENOUGH TO BE ON HIS LIST OF LADY ROGUES.

I'LL SHOW HIM! I'LL PROVE THAT THE CATWOMAN IS THE GREATEST WOMAN CRIMINAL OF ALL TIME! AND I'LL USE "THE LADY ROGUES" TO DO IT!

THE NEXT DAY...

FLASH! PARAGON PICTURES WILL PRESENT GALA KAZON AS CIRCE, AT GOTHAM ISLAND AMPHITHEATER TONIGHT!



ON A LITTLE ISLAND OFF GOTHAM, CIRCE'S ISLAND OF AEGEA IS RECREATED, AND THE PLAY OPENS...



AH! A SHIP! NOW I SHALL HAVE COMPANY!

I AM ODYSSEUS! MY MEN AND I HAVE TRAVELED FAR AND WE NEED FOOD AND DRINK!



WELCOME! ENTER MY HOUSE, AND FOOD AND DRINK I SHALL PROVIDE THEE!

FOOLS! ONCE THEY DRINK OF THE MAGIC POTION, THEY SHALL TURN INTO SWINE! HA! HA!



AT THAT MOMENT, HANDS OPEN CAGES AND WILD SWINE ARE TURNED LOOSE!



BOARS!

WE'LL BE GORED!

EEEE!

CATWOMAN! YOU RELEASED THOSE WILD SWINE!

THAT'S RIGHT, DEARIE! NOW I'LL TAKE THOSE PEARLS YOU'RE WEARING! PEARLS BEFORE THE SWINE! HA! HA!



BUT IN THE PANICKY AUDIENCE ARE TWO CALM FIGURES...

QUICK, DICK...
WE'VE GOT TO
STOP THIS!

RIGHT,
BRUCE!

A SWITCH OF GARB, AND BRUCE WAYNE
AND DICK GRAYSON BECOME BATMAN
AND ROBIN...

OKAY,
ROBIN!
THROW!

NOW'S OUR
CHANCE, WHILE
THE BOARS ARE
CONFUSED!

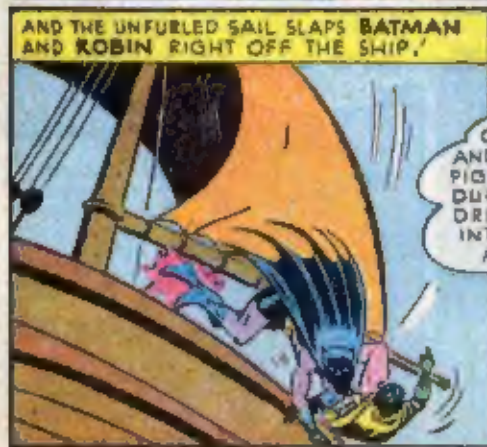
AS THEY BUILD A CAGE OF BENCHES AROUND THE VICIOUS
WILD SWINE...

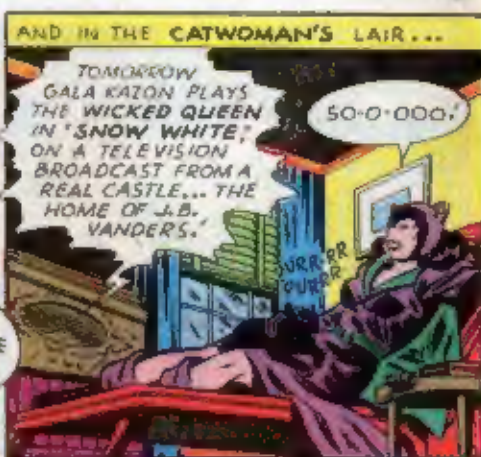
ROBIN!
BEHIND
YOU!

GOLLY!
I'M IN FOR
IT!

BUT BATMAN'S SILKEN LASSO STOPS THE
LUNGING BOARD!

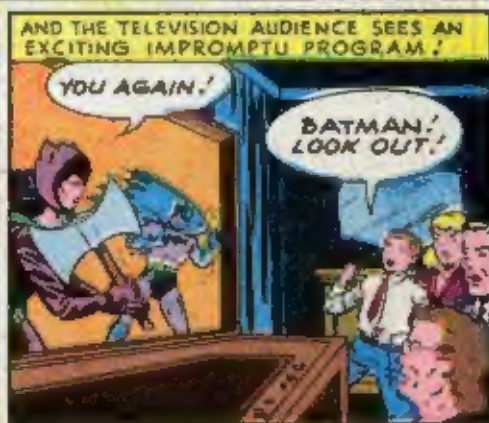
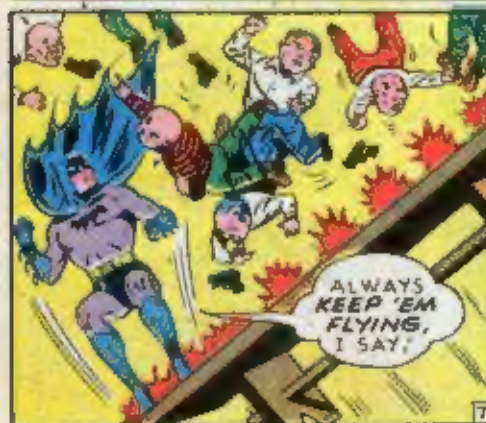
THIS'LL
FIX THAT
GALLOPING
HAMSTEAK!





SHORTLY... IN TELEVISION SETS ALL OVER THE U. S. A. ...





ANOTHER BOY IS ALSO ALERT TO BATMAN'S DANGER...



ROBIN, YOU GET THE DWARFS... I'LL GO AFTER THE CATWOMAN!

OUT OF MY WAY!



BUT ROBIN FINDS THE DWARFS HAVE GROWN!



BUT, EVER RESOURCEFUL, THE BOY WONDER SEIZES AN OLD CANNONBALL AND...

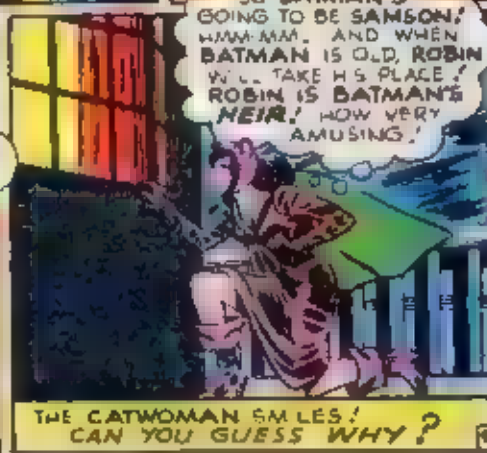
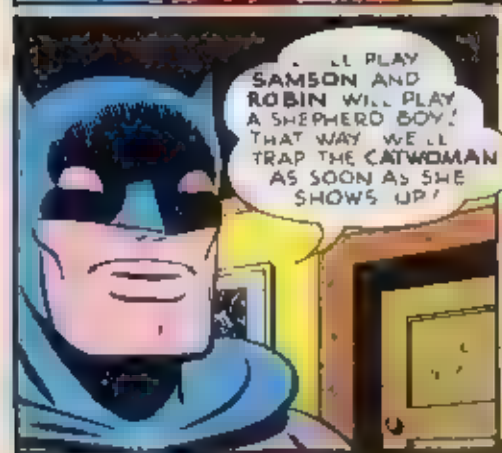
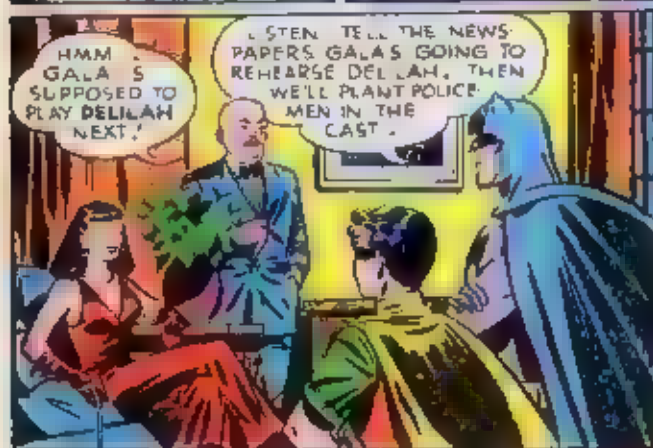
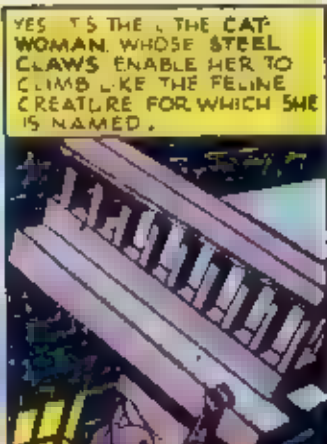
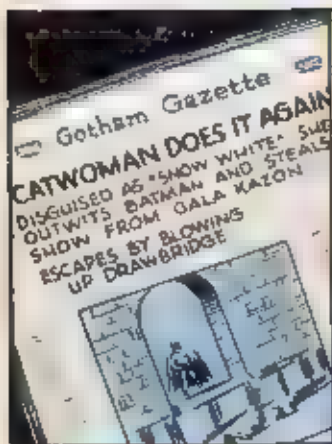


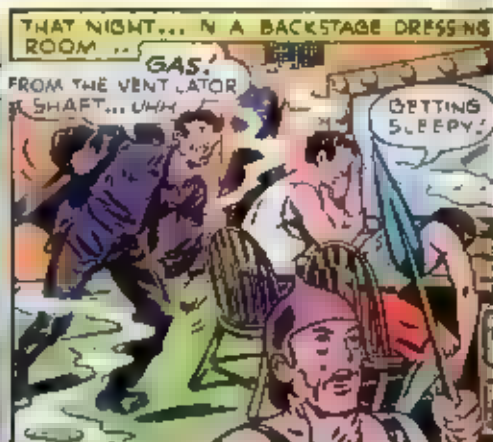
MEANTIME, ON POLICE MOTORCYCLES, BATMAN AND CATWOMAN LEAVE THE CASTLE...



BUT THE CATWOMAN FLIPS A GRENADE OVER HER SHOULDER, AND...







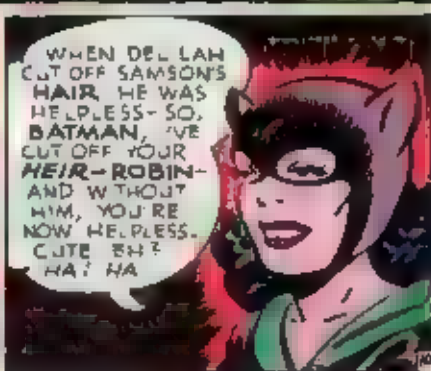
LATER... OFFSTAGE, SHEPHERD BOY ROBIN IS SUDDENLY SEIZED FROM BEHIND!



AND ONSTAGE BATMAN IS COSTUMED AS SAMSON



ABRUPTLY, THE CATWOMAN MAKES A SPECTACULAR ENTRANCE!



AND AS IN THE STORY OF SAMSON, BATMAN IS CHAINED TO THE PILLARS...

HA! HA! NOW I'LL TAKE A PICTURE OF YOU, BATMAN, AND SEND IT TO THE NEWSPAPERS. WAIT TILL YOUR FANS SEE YOU IN THAT GETUP! HA! HA!

...AND BRINGS THE PILLARS DOWN ON HIS ENEMIES!



BUT THE BANDITS ARE ONLY STUNNED, NOT CRUSHED...

HEY, I AIN'T NO T

BECAUSE THE SET IS BUILT OF CANVAS AND LIGHT Balsa WOOD! FOOLS GET BATMAN!

ME TOO HOW COME?

BUT AS THE THUGS CHARGE BATMAN ADJUSTS HIS COWL, FLIPS A MATCH AT HIS DISCARDED WIG... AND...



BUT AGAIN LIKE SAMSON, BATMAN GATHERS HIS GREAT STRENGTH STRAINS AT THE PILLARS...

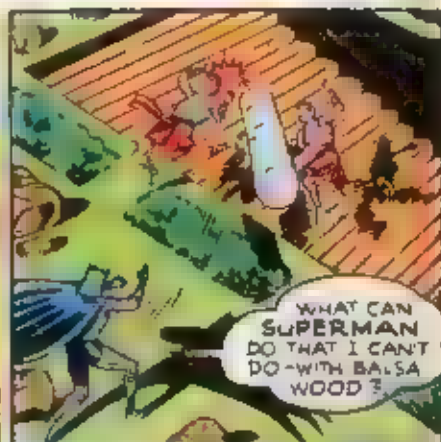
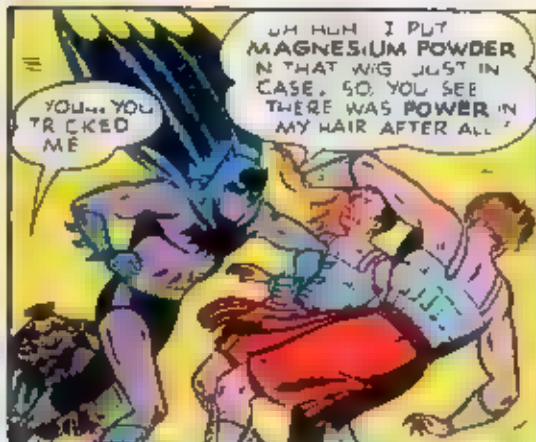


...THERE'S A BLINDING FLASH OF LIGHT!

AGGH!

I CAN'T SEE!





BATMAN

WITH
ROBIN

-THE BOY WONDER-

BOB
WAYNE

IT WAS THE STRANGEST CHRISTMAS EVE BRUCE WAYNE EVER HAD! HE WAS KISSED BY A STRANGE GIRL... ARRESTED FOR ROBBERY... PUT IN THE POLICE LINE-UP... HUNTED BY KILLERS... AND FINALLY SENT TO PRISON: WHY? ALL BECAUSE HE WANTED TO PLAY SANTA CLAUS TO HIS DOUBLE! YOU'LL READ ALL ABOUT IT IN...

"A PAROLE for CHRISTMAS!"



THERE'S AN OLD SAYING THAT EVERY MAN ON EARTH HAS HIS DOUBT... AND BRUCE WAYNE ALAS THE BATMAN, HAS HIS. THIS IS THE DRAMATIC STORY OF HOW THEY MET..



IT BEGINS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS WHEN MOST PEOPLE ARE SHOPPING FOR LAST MINUTE GIFTS.



...AND IN THE GRIM STATE PRISON CONVICT ED ROGERS GETS HIS CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

I'M GLAD YOU'RE ONE OF THE MODEL PRISONERS ALLOWED TO GO HOME FOR CHRISTMAS. ROGERS YOU'VE EARNED IT.

HANKS GUARD



YOUR PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND 24 HOUR PASS REMEMBER YOUR SENTENCE IS UP IN SIX MONTHS. SO DON'T BREAK YOUR HONOR PAROLE.

I'LL BE BACK TOMORROW NIGHT WARDEN



LATER, ON A FERRY...

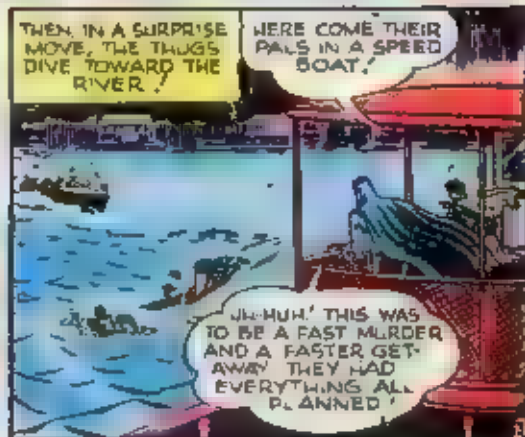
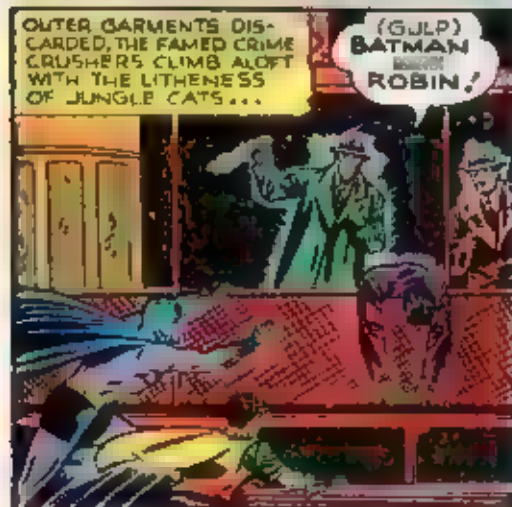
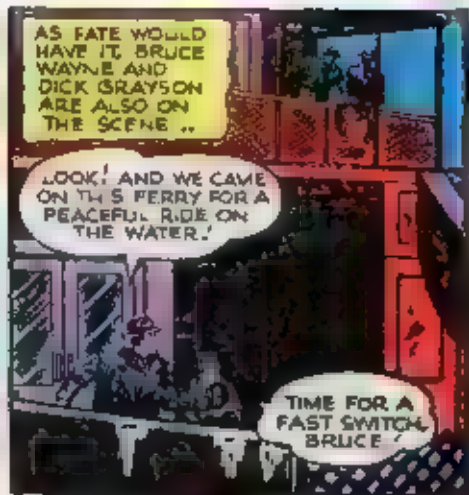
IT'LL BE GOOD TO SEE MY KID BROTHER TIMMY AGAIN. LAURA'S A PEACH TO HAVE TAKEN CARE OF HIM SINCE THE FOLKS DIED.

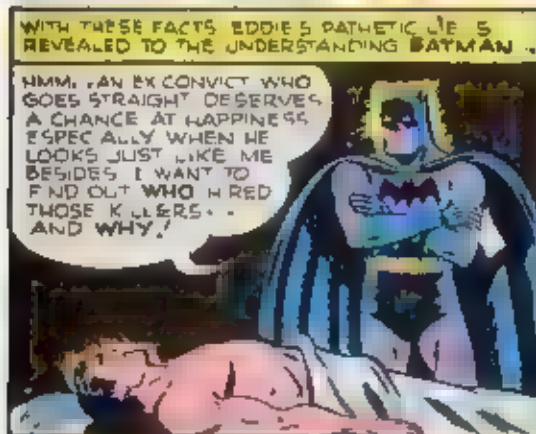
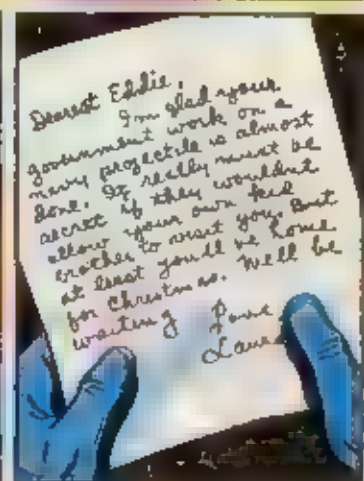
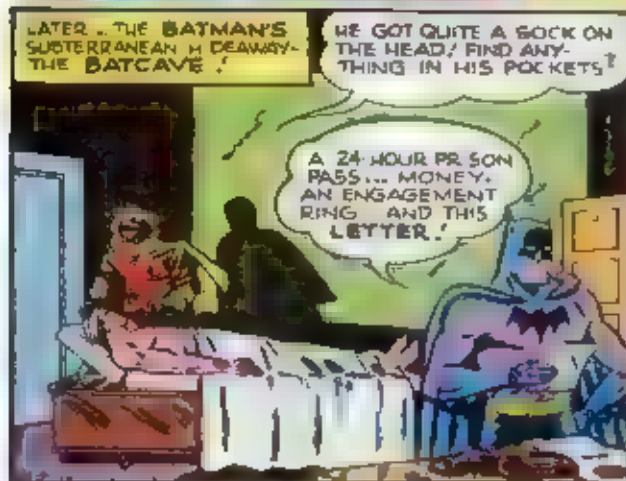
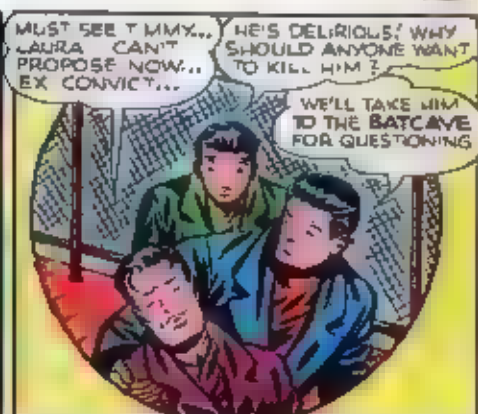
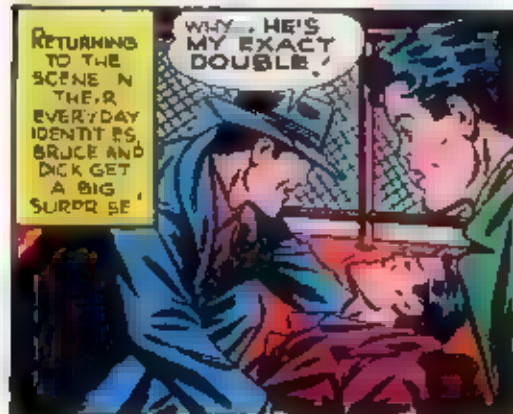


LOOK OUT ROGERS... BEHIND YOU

LAURA'S ENGAGEMENT RING SHE THINKS I'VE BEEN AWAY WORKING ON A SECRET NAVY PROJECT. I CAN'T PROPOSE NOW. SHE DESERVES SOMEONE BETTER THAN AN EX-CONVICT.





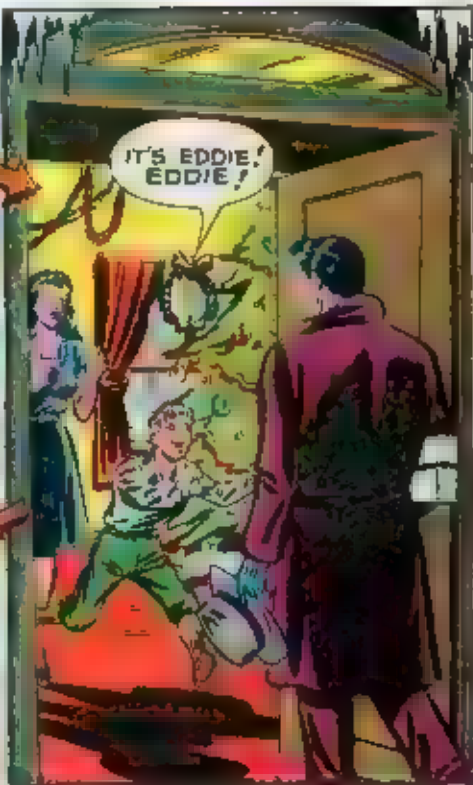


SOMETIME LATER
BRUCE WAYNE STANDS
ON THE THRESHOLD
OF AN EXCITING
MASQUERADE

THE MOMENT
I RING THE BELL,
I MUST FORGET
I'M BRUCE WAYNE
AND LIVE THE ROLE
OF ED ROGERS.
HERE GOES.



IT'S EDDIE!
EDDIE!



GOLLY EDDIE
I'M USED TO
SOMETHING
AWFUL. GOLLY



AREN'T YOU GOING
TO KISS ME? I'M
STANDING UNDER
THE MISTLETOE

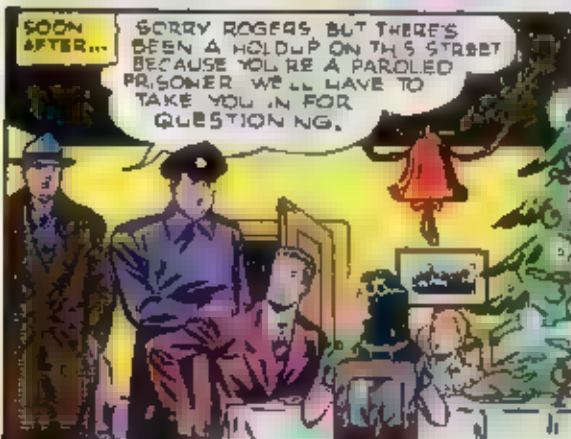
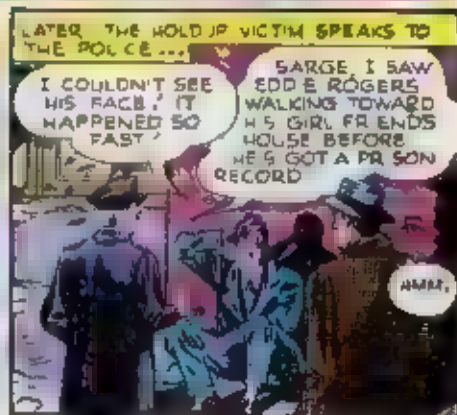
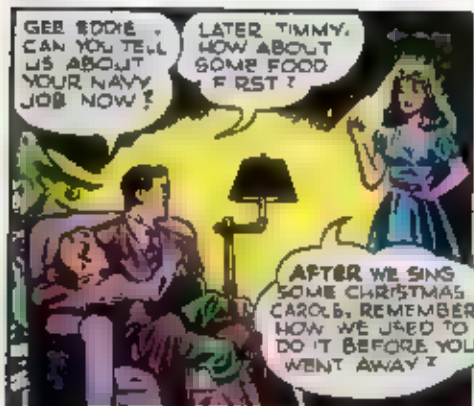
(GOLLY)
S-SURE



WELCOME
HOME,
EDDIE

IT'S GOOD TO
BE HOME FOR
CHRISTMAS





STILL PLAYING THE PART OF EDDIE,
BRUCE MAKES A FULL "CONFESSION"

SO THAT'S
WHY YOU NEVER
WROTE. WE'D
HAVE SEEN THE
PRISON STAMP
ON THE ENVELOPE!

YES... I... I PRETENDED
THE NAVY PROJECT
WAS SO SECRET I
WASN'T ALLOWED
TO WRITE A FRIEND
FORWARDED YOUR
LETTERS TO ME

I DIDN'T WANT TO HURT
YOU, SO I LIED! I'M SORRY
I RUINED YOUR CHRISTMAS!
I... I... LET'S GO OFFICER!



LATER... FOR THE
FIRST TIME IN
HIS LIFE BRUCE
WAYNE STANDS
IN THE POLICE
LINE UP!



EDWARD ROGERS—
NO ALIAS... ~~EDWARD~~—
VIOL'S ARREST... SENT-
ENCED TO ONE YEAR FOR
PETTY BURGLARY CHARGE
... EXCELLENT PRISON
RECORD.

ROGERS YOU'RE
UNDER SUSPICION
OF COMMITTING
AN ASSAULT AND
ROBBERY TONIGHT
HOW DO YOU
PLEAD?

NOT GUILTY,
SIR!



HE'S RIGHT,
LEUTENANT!

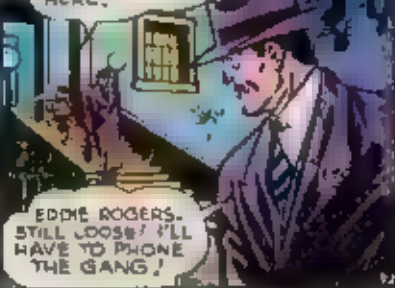
ROBIN! I CAN VOUCH FOR
HIM, OFFICER!

THIS IS VERY
UNUSUAL... BUT
ROBIN'S WORD IS
GOOD ENOUGH FOR
US! YOU CAN GO,
ROGERS!

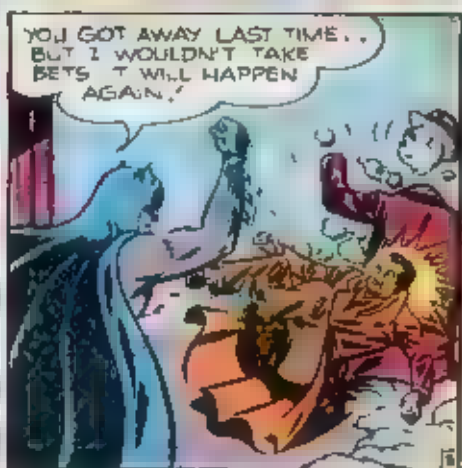
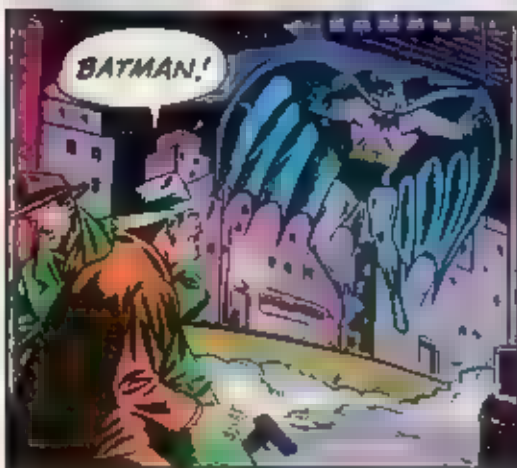
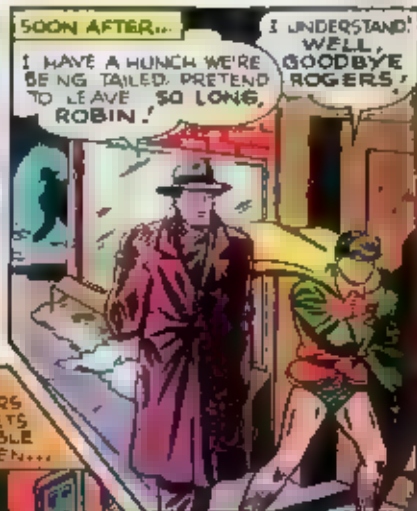


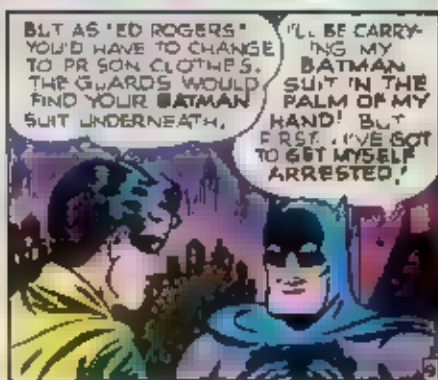
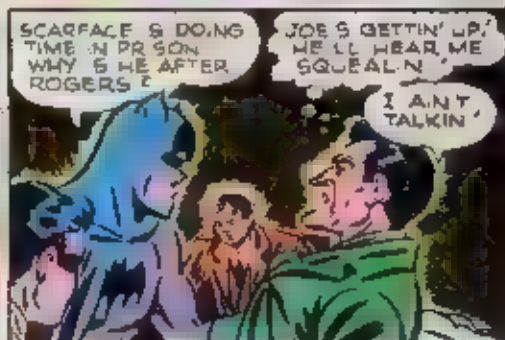
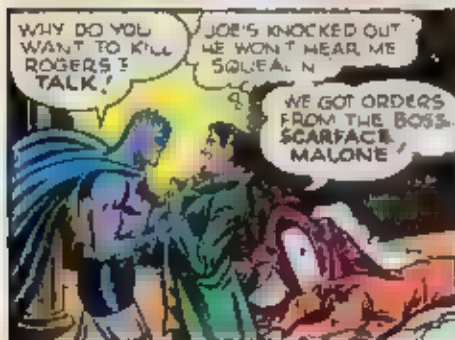
WHEN I HEARD ABOUT
THE ROBBERY ON
LAURA'S STREET,
BRUCE, I FIGURED
THEY'D ARREST
YOU, SO I HURRIED
HERE!

THAT WAS
FAST THINKING,
ROBIN!



EDDIE ROGERS.
STILL LOOSE! I'LL
HAVE TO PHONE
THE GANG!







LATER "ED ROGERS" PURPOSELY BUMPS INTO A PATROLMAN ON HIS BEAT.

UH... SORRY!

OW! WHAT'RE YOU CARRYING IN THAT POCKET—A GUN? SAY... HOLD ON, BUDDY!



IT IS A GUN! YOU BETTER COME ALONG WITH ME!



AND THAT'S HOW "ED ROGERS" BREAKS HIS PAROLE.

WHY DID YOU DO IT, ROGERS? AND I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING STRAIGHT. TAKE HIM BACK TO HIS CELL.



A CELL DOOR CLANGS SHUT—AND THE PRISONER IS ALONE.

SO FAR SO GOOD! THEY DIDN'T NOTICE I WAS HOLDING MY BATMAN SUIT ALL THE TIME AND... OH OH, I HEAR SOUNDS... VOICES... UNDER THE CELL FLOOR!



AND UNDER THE CELL FLOOR LIKE DESPERATE MOLES CONVICTS ARE DIGGING.

NOW THAT ROGERS IS DEAD, HIS CELL IS EMPTY AND WE CAN DIG RIGHT THROUGH!



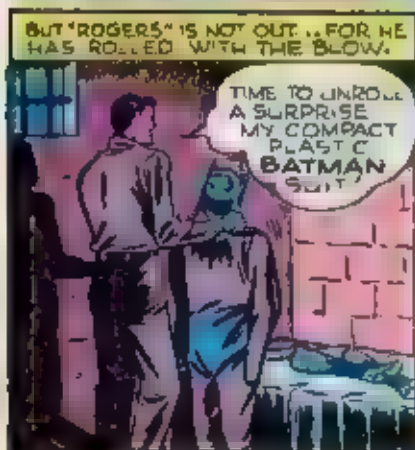
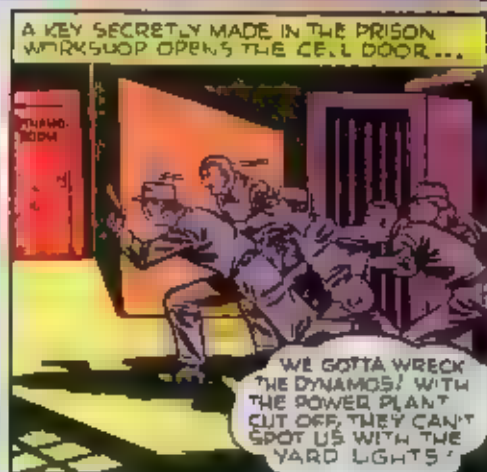
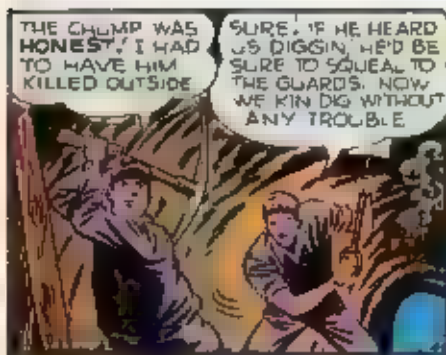
THAT CHUMP ROGERS GAVE HIM HIS CHANCE TO COME IN WITH US...

"I REMEMBER SAYIN' TO HIM..."

LISTEN, I'M NOT SAYIN' THERE IS GONNA BE A JAIL BREAK BUT IF THERE'S WILL YOU JOIN UP WITH US?

NO, I'M GOING STRAIGHT. I'VE LEARNED MY LESSON!





EDITOR'S NOTE: BATMAN'S SLIP-ON SUIT SO PLIABLE IT CAN BE ROLLED INTO A BALL, IS MADE OF THE SAME TYPE OF THIN FABRIC USED IN THE MANUFACTURE OF THE NEW FOLDING RAIN COATS.



AT THE SOUND OF THE CRASHING SHOTS, GUARDS SURGE TOWARD THE RIOTING CONVICTS.

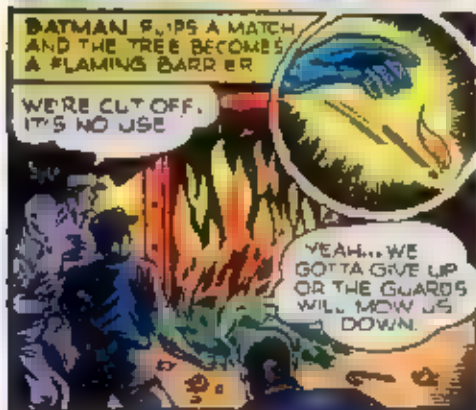
WE'LL HAVE TO SMASH OUR WAY OUT NOW. THAT DOOR LEADS TO THE YARD. COME ON!



BATMAN FLIPS A MATCH AND THE TREE BECOMES A FLAMING BARRIER.

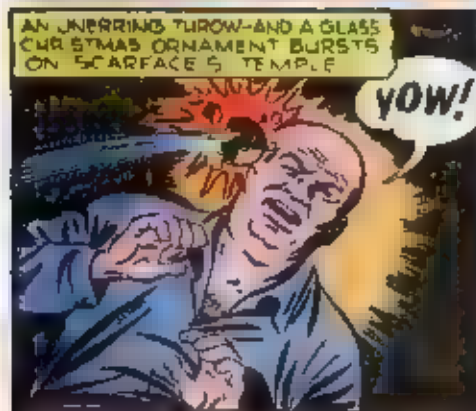
WE'RE CUT OFF. IT'S NO USE.

YEAH... WE GOTTA GIVE UP OR THE GUARDS WILL MOW US DOWN.



AN UNERRING THROW—AND A GLASS CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT BURSTS ON SCARFACE'S TEMPLE.

YOW!



IRONICALLY, A CHRISTMAS TREE, ERECTED TO CHEER THE PRISONERS, IS NOW TO BRING THEM DISTRESS.

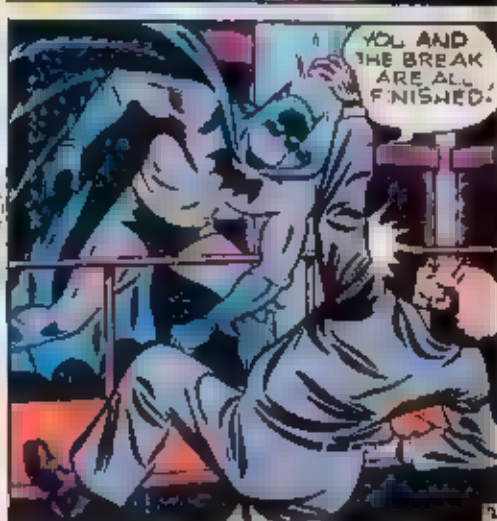


BLAST YOU! YOU STOPPED OUR CRASHOUT. I'M GONNA GET YOU BEFORE THE COPPERS GET ME!

DYNAMIC ROOM!



YOU AND THE BREAK ARE ALL FINISHED!





LATER, THE WARDEN HEARS EVERYTH'NG...
THAT IS, NOT QUITE EVERYTHING...

...SO I... UH...
DISGUISED MY FACE
TO RESEMBLE
ROGERS AND
TOOK OVER!

AND IF ROGERS HAD
NOT BEEN HONEST
THE BREAK WOULD'VE
SUCCEEDED! WHEN
THE PAROLE BOARD
HEARS THAT THEY'LL
CHANGE HIS 24 HOUR
PAROLE TO A
PERMANENT
ONE



STILL LATER, THE NOW RECOVERED ROGERS
HEARS THE SAME STORY...

THANKS FOR EVERYTHING!
BUT NOW LALRA AND
I MMY KNOW THE
TRUTH! NOW CAN
I FACE THEM?

YOU'LL HAVE
TO SOONER
OR LATER SO
WHY NOT DO
IT NOW?



YOU WON'T HAVE TO SAY
A WORD! I PHONED THEM
BEFORE WE LEFT. GO
SEE THEM... THEY'RE
WAITING FOR YOU!



SO, FOR
THE
SECOND
TIME ON
CHRISTMAS
EVE, ED
ROGERS
& WEL
COMED
HOME!



I WAS KISSED ONCE
TONIGHT. NOW
I WANT THE REAL
EDDIE ROGERS
TO DO IT!

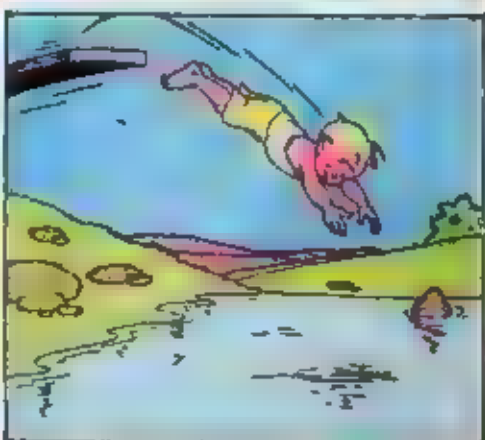


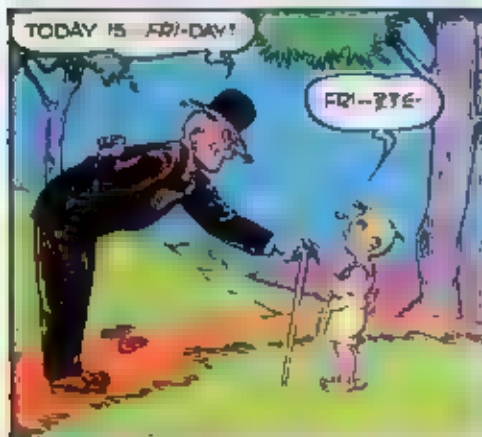
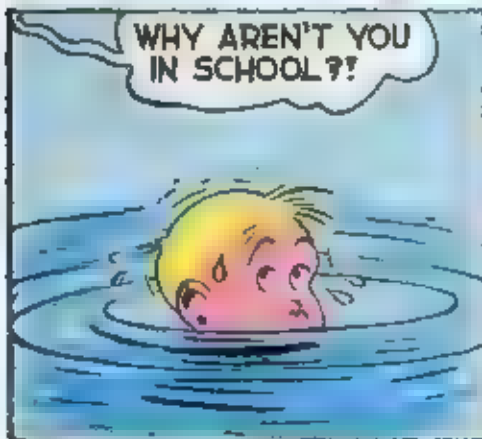
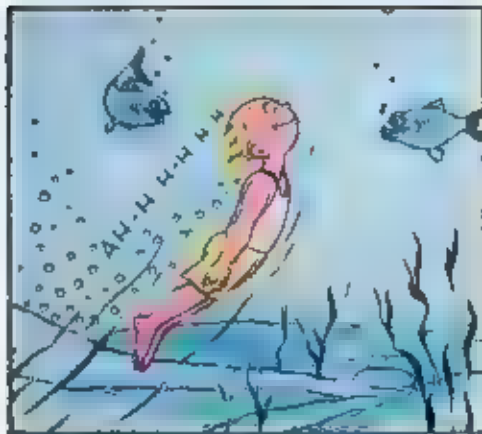
COME ON... YOU'VE
DELIVERED YOUR
CHRISTMAS PRESENT!
LET'S GO HOME,
SANTA CLAUS!



Merry
Christmas



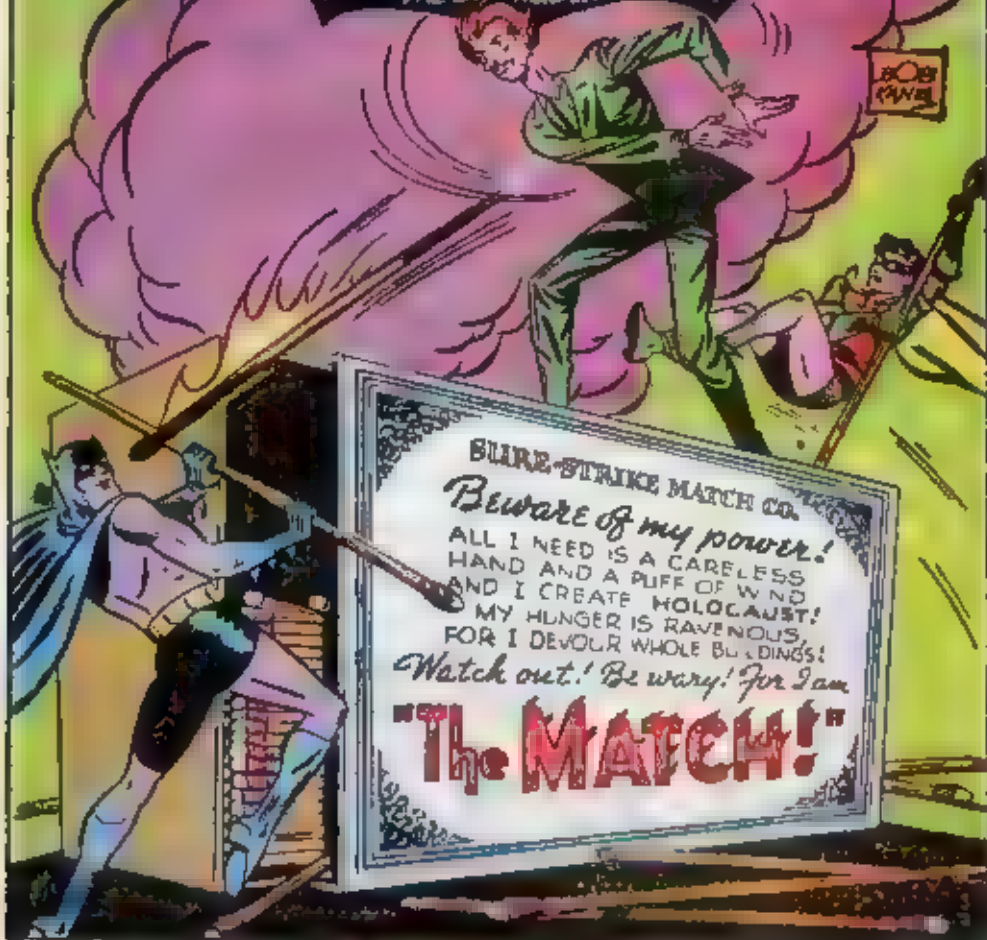




BAT MAN

WITH
ROBIN

-THE BOY WONDER-



SURE-STRIKE MATCH CO.

Beware of my power!

ALL I NEED IS A CARELESS

HAND AND A PUFF OF WIND

AND I CREATE HOLOCAUST!

MY HUNGER IS RAVENOUS,

FOR I DEVOUR WHOLE BUILDINGS!

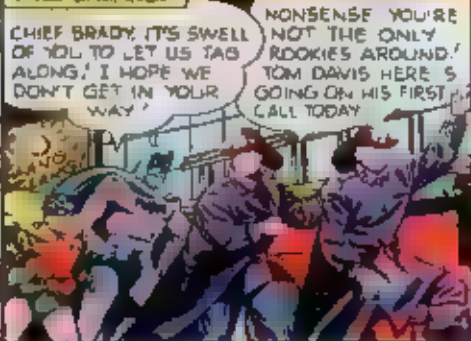
Watch out! Be wary! For I am

"THE MATCH!"

SOMEWHERE IN GOTHAM CITY A TINY STICK OF WOOD RASPS AGAINST SANDPAPER AND FLARES INTO FLAME! THE MATCH IS STRIKING AGAIN!



LATER, AT THE FIRE HOUSE THE DYNAMIC DUO ARRIVES JUST AS A THREE ALARM FIRE BREAKS!



CHIEF BRADY: IT'S SWELL OF YOU TO LET US TAG ALONG! I HOPE WE DON'T GET IN YOUR WAY!

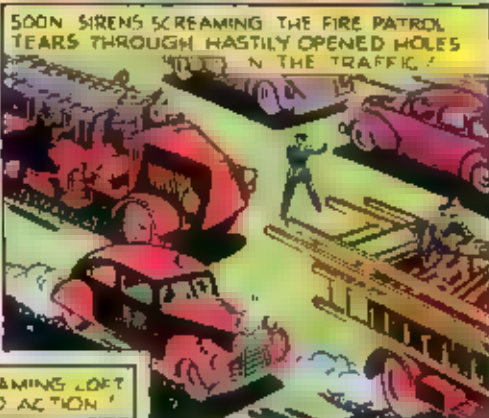
NONSENSE YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ROOKIES AROUND! TOM DAVIS HERE'S GOING ON HIS FIRST CALL TODAY!

BRUCE WAYNE AND HIS YOUNG WARD, DICK GRAYSON, AS THE BATMAN AND ROBIN, THE BOY WONDER PONDER OVER THE SERIES OF FIRES...



WHEN ARE WE GOING TO STOP THIS ARSON RACKETEER WHO CALLS HIMSELF THE MATCH?

DICK: THE ONE WAY TO NAB HIM IS TO JOIN FORCES WITH HIS ENEMY THE FIRE DEPARTMENT!



SOON SIRENS SCREAMING THE FIRE PATROL TEARS THROUGH HASTILY OPENED HOLES IN THE TRAFFIC!

ARRIVING AT THE SCENE OF THE FIRE, A FLAMING LOST BUILDING THE CHIEF ORDERS HIS MEN INTO ACTION!



I WANT TWO MEN ON THE ROOF WITH AXES! MAKE A FIRE OUTLET! GET A CHEMICAL LINE WORKING IN THE BASEMENT!



TOM: RUN A HOSE INSIDE! LET'S SEE IF YOU'RE AS GOOD A FIRE MAN AS YOUR FATHER WAS!

Y: YES, SIR!



AND NOW ANOTHER PART OF THE FIRE FIGHTING TEAM ENTERS THE SALVAGE SQUAD THAT SHIELDS THE FURNITURE WITH ASBESTOS



INSIDE THE BLAZING BUILDING ROOKIE DAVIS UNWITTINGLY BRUSHES AGAINST A LOW VOLTAGE WIRE EXPOSED BY THE FIRE



HIS WET BOOTS AND METAL HELMET ARE PERFECT CONDUCTORS OF ELECTRICITY AND THE SHOCK SENDS HIM SPINNING

FIRE... ALL AROUND ME... FIRE... I'LL BE BURNED ALIVE... FIRE...

OH-OH! HE'S PANICKY!

CHIEF BRADY: DAVIS IS IN TROUBLE! SWING THE LADDER FORWARD! I'LL GET HIM!

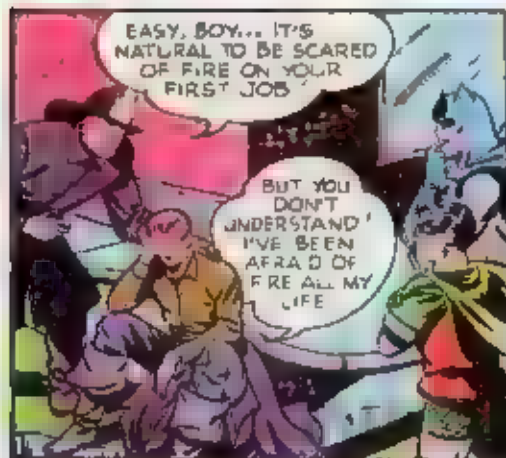
HOLD ON, DAVIS! I'M COMING!

AND FROM HIGH ON THE AERIAL TRUCK, NOZZLEMEN BATMAN AND ROBIN PLAY WATER ON THE LEAPING FLAMES



IN A MOMENT, BATMAN REACHES THE ROOKIE LAD AND THEN JUMPS TO A WAITING NET BELOW





EASY, BOY... IT'S NATURAL TO BE SCARED OF FIRE ON YOUR FIRST JOB

BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND I'VE BEEN AFRAID OF FIRE ALL MY LIFE

"THEN THE FIRE PATROL ROLLED UP! THEY GOT ME OUT— JUST IN TIME!"



HOW IS HE? HOW'S MY SON?

HE'S OKAY, MISTER! JUST FRIGHTENED.

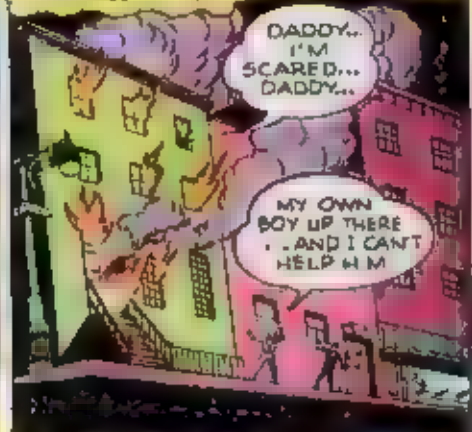
"TWO YEARS AGO, DAD LOST HIS LIFE, SAVING ANOTHER CHILD'S."



SON, BEING A FIREMAN IS A CALLING... LIKE KNIGHTHOOD BECAUSE YOU HELP PEOPLE. PROMISE ME YOU'LL CARRY ON...

I... I PROMISE.

"IT ALL STARTED WHEN I WAS SEVEN. THERE WAS A FIRE IN OUR HOUSE! I WAS TRAPPED IN IT."



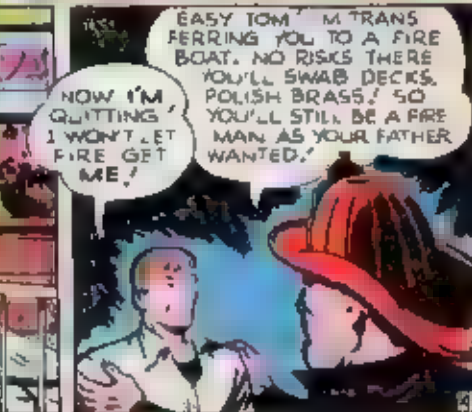
DADDY... I'M SCARED... DADDY...

MY OWN BOY UP THERE... AND I CAN'T HELP HIM

"AFTER THAT, DAD QUIT HIS JOB AND BECAME A FIREMAN. I REMEMBER HIM SAYING..."



BUT FOR A FIREMAN, YOU WOULDN'T BE ALIVE! I'M JOINING THE PATROL TO SHOW MY GRATITUDE! SOME DAY YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHAT I MEAN.



NOW I'M QUITTING. I WON'T LET FIRE GET ME!

EASY TOM! I'M TRANSFERRING YOU TO A FIRE BOAT. NO RISKS THERE YOU'LL SWAB DECKS, POLISH BRASS! SO YOU'LL STILL BE A FIREMAN AS YOUR FATHER WANTED!

LATER... WHEN THE FIRE IS OUT, THE ARSON SQUAD INVESTIGATES TO DISCOVER WHETHER IT WAS MAN-MADE OR ACCIDENTAL...



IF ANYONE
POURED SOME
IGNITIBLE FLUID ON
THE FLOOR, WE'LL
SOON KNOW IT!
INCENDIARY MATERIAL
LEAVES ITS
"FINGERPRINTS"
ON BURNED WOOD.
I'LL TEST THIS
CHARRED
BIT!

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE, THE TELL-TALE CRACKS ON THE BURNED WOOD INDICATE THAT ABNORMAL HEAT WAS INVOLVED!



"ALLIGATORING":
THE CHARACTERISTIC
MARKS LEFT BY
KEROSENE.

THE MAN WHO HAD RENTED THE LOFT IS CALLED...

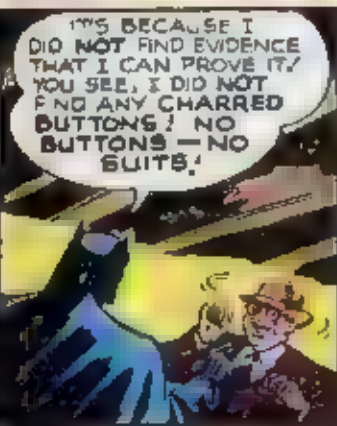


MR. SMITH,
WE'RE
ARRESTING
YOU FOR
ARSON!

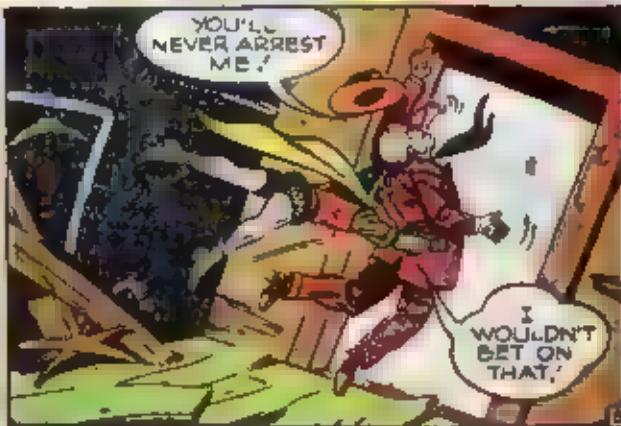
RIDICULOUS! MY LOFT
WAS FILLED WITH EXPENSIVE
MEN'S SUITS. THE INSURANCE
WON'T EVEN COVER
MY LOSS, SO WHY SHOULD
I COMMIT ARSON?

BECAUSE YOU
REMOVED THE SUITS
AND SUBSTITUTED
UNCUT, CHEAP
CLOTH ON THE
RACKS!

YOU'VE GOT NO
EVIDENCE TO
PROVE THAT!



IT'S BECAUSE I
DID NOT FIND EVIDENCE
THAT I CAN PROVE IT!
YOU SEE, I DID NOT
FIND ANY CHARRED
BUTTONS! NO
BUTTONS—NO
SUITS!



YOU'LL
NEVER ARREST
ME!

I
WOULDN'T
GET ON
THAT!



LATER...THE QUESTIONING.

BUSINESS WAS BAD!
I NEEDED MONEY!
THEN THE MATCH
APPROACHED
ME!

THE
MATCH!

THE MATCH
RUNS AN ARSON
RING. HE SETS
FEE'S FOR "FEES"
DEPENDING ON THE
AMOUNT OF INSUR-
ANCE CARRIED BY
HIS "CLIENTS".

NOW DID
THE MATCH
KNOW YOUR
BUSINESS
WAS BAD?

I DON'T
KNOW! I
NEVER SPOKE
TO ANYBODY
ABOUT IT

THAT'S A
TOUGH PUZZLE!
I THINK I'LL
SLEEP ON IT

NEXT DAY.

WHAT'S
UP?

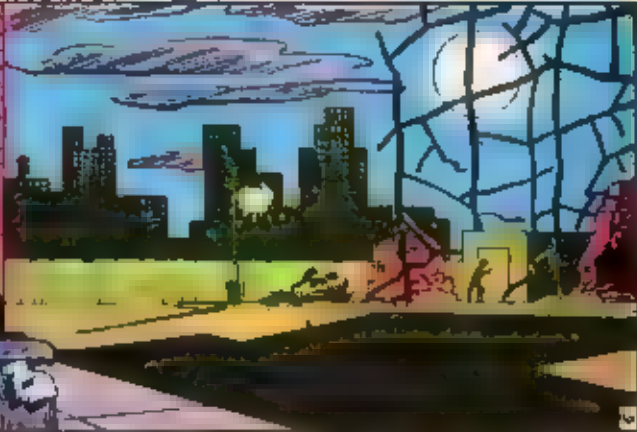
I'M GOING TO QUESTION
CERTAIN PAST "CLIENTS"
OF THE MATCH. AND IF
I GET THE RIGHT ANSWERS
I'M GOING TO MAKE
A PHONE CALL.

THAT NIGHT

JONES DE
MATCH WANTS
TO SEE YA,
RIGHT AWAY!
GET GOIN'!

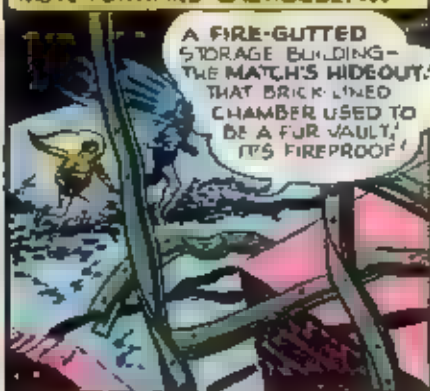
OKAY!

LATER! BEFORE A FIRE
GUTTED BUILDING WHOSE
TWISTED STEEL BEAMS AND
CHARRED WALLS REAR
GLOOMILY AGAINST THE
NIGHT SKY



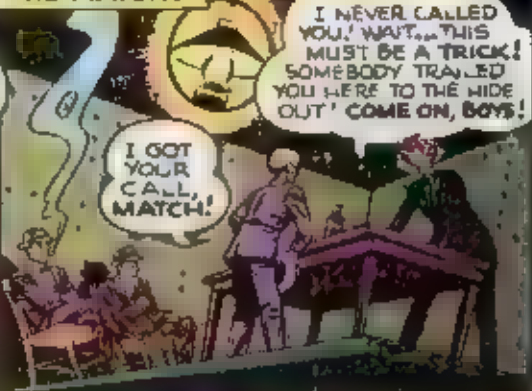


A MOMENT LATER, TWO CRIMEBUSTERS
MOVE FORWARD CAUTIOUSLY...



A FIRE-GUTTED
STORAGE BUILDING—
THE MATCH'S HIDEOUT!
THAT BRICK-LINED
CHAMBER USED TO
BE A FUR VAULT;
IT'S FIREPROOF!

AND INSIDE THAT IMPENETRABLE VAULT
THE MATCH.



I NEVER CALLED
YOU! WAIT... THIS
MUST BE A TRICK!
SOMEBODY TRAILED
YOU HERE TO THE HIDE
OUT! COME ON, BOYS!

I GOT
YOUR
CALL,
MATCH!

A DOOR SLAMS OPEN AND VIOLENT ACTION
FLARES LIKE A HOT FLAME.



A POKE
FOR A
PYRO.

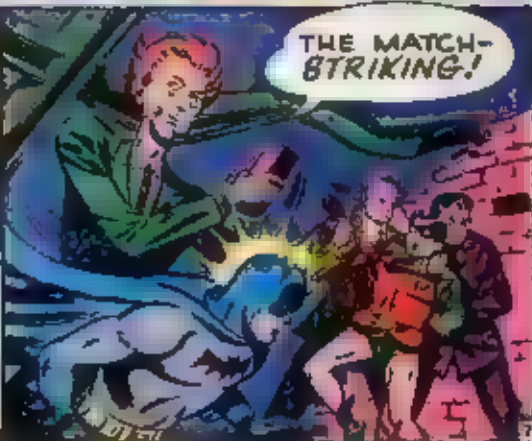
DROP
THAT GUN,
HOT SHOT!

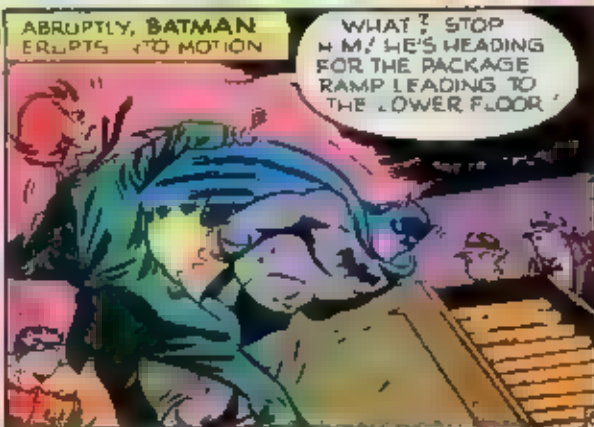
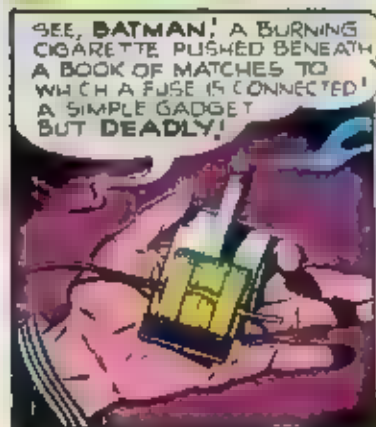
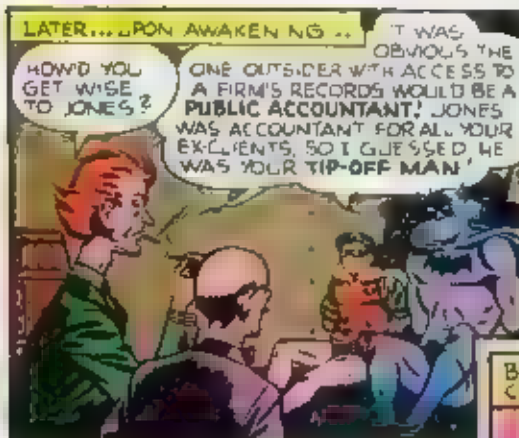
HMM-MM!

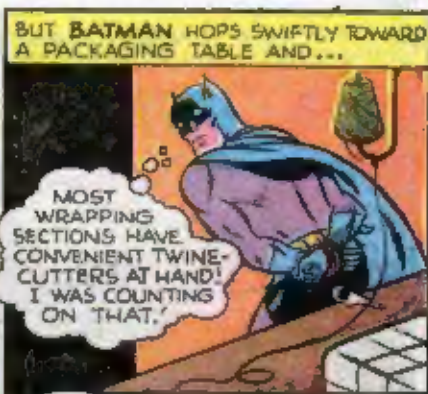
TOO BAD YOU
DON'T SMOKE—
BUT HERES A
LIGHT ANYWAY!

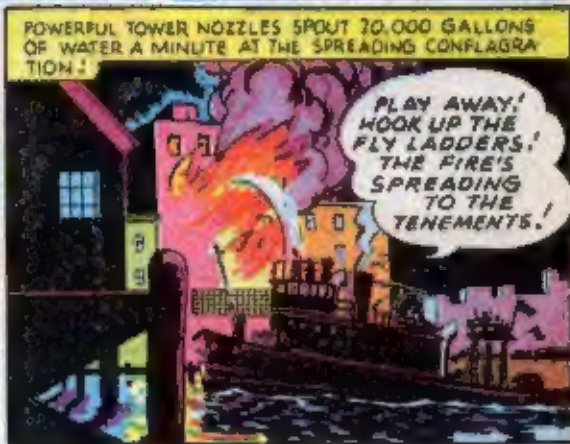


THE MATCH-
STRIKING!









THEN TOM DAVIS REMEMBERS...THINKS BACK TO ANOTHER DAY...WHEN ANOTHER FATHER AND SON NEEDED HELP...

DADDY...
I'M SCARED...
DADDY...

MY OWN BOY...
UP THERE... AND
I CAN'T HELP
HIM!

HOOKING A SCALING LADDER INTO PLACE,
TOM DAVIS BEGINS HIS GRIM FIGHT UP-
WARD—THE FIGHT OF HIS LIFE.

NOW I KNOW
WHAT DAD MEANT!
HOLD ON, KID...I'M
COMING! BUT I'M
AFRAID! I'M
SCARED STIFF!

MEANWHILE ... INSIDE THAT FIERY FURNACE...

MY BOYS GOT OUT!
NOW IT'S MY TURN—
BUT I'LL MAKE SURE
YOUR GOOSE IS
COOKED!

BATMAN—
BEHIND YOU!

A NEW VERSION
OF THE
HOT-FOOT,
MATCH!

YOW!
I'M BURNING!

WHY BE
SURPRISED?
ANYBODY WHO
PLAYS WITH
MATCHES
SHOULD
EXPECT TO
BE BURNED!

THE
FIRE'S GOT
US BOXED
IN!

THE RIVER'S DOWN
BELOW. YOU FIRST,
MATCH!

NO...
NOT ME...
I'M SCARED
OF WATER...
I WON'T GO
NEAR WATER...
I'M NOT
JUMPIN'!

